

REMARKS

The present Amendment is in response to the Examiner's non-final Office Action mailed November 14, 2008. Claims 1-6, 9-15, 22-28, and 41-45 are cancelled. Claims 7, 29 and 36 are amended. Accordingly, Claims 7-8, 16-21 and 29-40 are now pending in view of the above amendments.

The Examiner's allowance of Claims 8, 16-21, and 30-40 is appreciated. Claim 36 has been amended to correct a typographical error.

The Examiner indicated that Claims 7 and 29 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Accordingly, Applicant has rewritten Claims 7 and 29 in an independent format so as to include all of the limitations of the base claim. Applicant notes that the scope of Claims 7 and 29 have not been narrowed in any way so as to overcome any prior art, but have merely been rewritten in an independent format. As acknowledged by the Examiner, the claims are patentably distinct from the prior art, and are now in a condition for allowance.

As noted above, Applicant has cancelled Claims 1-6, 9-15, 22-28, and 41-45. Applicant respectfully disagrees with the Examiner's rejection of these claims; however, the present application has been pending since February 2004, that is, five years' time. Accordingly, in order to obtain an issued patent, the Applicant has cancelled Claims 1-6, 9-15, 22-28, and 41-45. Applicant reserves its right to pursue further patent prosecution in a to-be-filed continuation application and, if necessary, address the Examiner's concerns as stated with respect to the rejected claims. The Applicant does not disclaim or dedicate to the public any of the subject matter of the rejected or cancelled claims.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicant believes the claims as amended are in allowable form. In the event that the Examiner finds remaining impediment to a prompt allowance of this application that may be clarified through a telephone interview, or which may be overcome by an Examiner's Amendment, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned attorney.

Applicant believes no fees are due for this submission. However, please debit any under payment to Deposit Account No. 08-2665.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: February 13, 2009